Out-of-Date Ideas

Dear Reader,

Electronic products have become an indispensable part of the modern world. Even in trucks, the use of electronics for things like assistance systems or infotainment is increasing. This trend can only increase with the expanding fleet of electric trucks and the associated need for charging infrastructure.

The problem for vehicle manufacturers in this scenario is the current global shortage of semiconductor chips. For several months now, this shortage of chips has placed the OEMs and their suppliers in dire straits. The scarcity of chips is partly due to the huge demand for semiconductors in many other industrial sectors. Unfortunately, suitable production lines cannot be brought online as fast as demand is increasing. This will result in competition between the individual sectors for the desired components for the foreseeable future.

This shortage is, however, partly home-made. The automotive industry, along with many others, have worked to continuously reduce their stock levels and depended on just-in-time deliveries. Our guest comment by Matthias Friese

on page 68 asks the question, "Have we gone too far with the idea of just-in-time?". Perhaps this concept is now out-of-date or at least needs to be adapted for certain components. The goal of reducing costs can quickly become a cost driver or lead to a drop in turnover. And not just in times of pandemics.

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Responsible Editor

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